

Lowton East Neighbourhood Development Forum (LENDF)  
Minutes to the Meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2013, at Lowton Social Club.  
<http://www.lendf.co.uk>

- Chairman – Ed Thwaite (Ed T), Secretary – Irene Thomson (IT)
- Cllr Grundy
- Guest Speaker – Sian Jay from Social Re:focus on behalf of Age UK
- Welcome to members, visitors and guests
- *Apologies – Ruth Mercer, Carol Leigh, Dennis Eubank, and Peter Sargeant (PS),  
Chairman of Lane Head South Residents Group*

No. of Attendees = 51

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1. **Minutes from last meeting** – not read at meeting but copies had been sent out by email and paper copies were available.

2. **Accounts**

LENDF bank balance details on view for those present at the meeting.

Also details on view of the donations received for the 'Say No' sign boards. We have received more than enough to cover the cost of these boards and there are 6 remaining which will be located on the main roads affected by the traffic congestion. Ed T thanked all those who had donated and the effect of them has been noted by many. We do know that the Government Inspector visited the proposed housing sites in Lowton/Golborne and we are sure 'he couldn't miss them' ☺

3. **Guest Speaker – Sian Jay from Social Re:focus on behalf of Age UK**

Sian introduced herself and explained that Age UK were researching 'What is needed for people to age well?' Age UK wanted to know 'what's important to you', and 'what needs to change'. She directed her questions to those present who were over 50, but also for people to think of their family members or neighbours when answering her questions. She asked a series of questions and then those present relayed to her their thoughts, suggestions, ideas, etc.

There is also the opportunity to feedback your comments via an online survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/s/M3XKMQ9](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/M3XKMQ9)

Sian is visiting various groups, organisations, companies throughout the Wigan Borough and will be compiling a report of responses and this will be available in due course.

A question was put to Sian if she would be able to come back to LENDF with feedback about what Age UK has done or will do following this research. Sian agreed.

4. **Police Crime and Commissioner – Public Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> March – 4pm to 6pm**

It was agreed that representatives from LENDF should attend this meeting to be held at The Council Chamber, Wigan Town Hall. Ed T and Cllr Grundy stated they will go and put questions to the Commissioner and then report back to the next LENDF meeting. It was suggested that he could be invited to a LENDF meeting to discuss issues with our members.

5. **Core Strategy – Inspector's Meetings**

Lowton and Golborne was the topic for discussion between the Council, developers,

interested parties and the Inspector on Wednesday March 6th. As a public audience is allowed at these meetings LENDF had encouraged as many residents as possible to attend.

**The turnout by residents was fantastic.** The room was full and extra chairs were brought in. Many thanks to all those who were able to attend as it made a huge difference to the debates at the meeting as at times the audience were vocal in their reactions (the Inspector had to bring order to the room on a number of occasions) and they also show their support of statements made by those fighting for Lowton/Golborne by way of applause. A very strong case was put forward by Andy Burnham MP, Cllr Grundy, Ed Thwaite (LENDF), Peter Sargeant (LHSRG), Colin Sinclair, Mr and Mrs Robb and Mr Greenhalgh. The room was full of emotion and we are sure the Inspector was fully aware of the feelings of the residents to the housing proposals. So again, thank you to all those who were present.

One 'bone of contention' has been the parcel of land at Pocket Nook which is in the ownership of Mr Adamson who had categorically told the Council and developers that it was not for sale. This was a key factor in the proceedings and it altered the land available significantly. Ed T thanked Mr Adamson (present at tonight's meeting) who was then given a round of applause by those present.

We got a commitment from the council to remove Mr Adamson's land from the Core Strategy and not to try any compulsory purchase.

Mr Adamson's land is now safe and we have about 450 houses less in our area.

It is hoped that the Government Inspector will remove more houses and spread the load around Wigan.

The Council produced an updated trajectory of house building over the next 15 years. This has been uploaded to our website (see Latest News page).

On the Friday the Inspector concluded the proceedings and will now make his decision/recommendations to the Council by 15<sup>th</sup> March (hopefully). As soon as LENDF gets a copy of the decision it will be circulated and uploaded to the website.

## **6. HS2**

A very good point about the HS2 proposed route was that the Government may need land either side of the route to be 'flexible' in case the route needed to be altered. Therefore it was put to the Council that some housing proposals were not deliverable. Both the Council and house builders seemed under the impression that property could be built up to 120 metres of the rail line.

## **7. Wainhomes**

Whilst we and the Council wait for Inspector's decision we still have to continue the monitoring of the Wainhomes application. There could be changes made to it depending on the decision i.e. number of houses reduced, affordable housing removed, delay in building due to economic situation, etc. The problem is that the Council need developers to build and they need affordable houses too!! As soon as we find out the date the application goes before the Planning Committee we shall inform everyone. These Planning Committee meetings are usually in the early evening so we are hoping for a high attendance by residents.

## **8. Other House builders**

It is quite possible that once the Inspector's decision is known that more planning applications are put forward by developers. Each one will need residents' comments and we shall continue to inform, door knock, issue press releases, etc, so that as many Lowton residents as possible have the opportunity to put their comments/objections to the council.

## **9. Neighbourhood Plan**

LENDF have previously mentioned the possibility of setting up a Neighbourhood Plan for Lowton East. This would be a huge undertaking and would need a certain amount of commitment by residents who could form the Core Committee to produce and run the Plan.

Further information on Neighbourhood Plans:

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/inyourarea/neighbourhood/>

Councillors for Hire check this out:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/9921344/Councillors-for-hire-who-give-firms-planning-advice.html> Must be stopped if possible.

## **10. Any Other Business**

### ***Fun Day and Last Night of the Proms***

Oaklands and Meadows Residents Association, together with LENDF, are proposing to once again provide two events – Fun Day for the youths of Lowton, and Last Night of the Proms for the more 'mature' ☺ All agreed that running these events would be good for the community. August being a possible point in the calendar dependant on the availability of Golborne Brass Band/LGNC Choir – and also the venues of Lowton Social Club and/or Lowton Civic Hall.

A sub-committee would need to be formed to organise and run these events and Ed T asked if anyone who wished to take part please respond.

Irene collected the following names for Sub-Committee:

Ed Thwaite, Malcolm Jones, John Walmsley, Irene Thomson, Carol Leigh, Ed Houlton, Howard Cooper.

The following names for Stewards on the day/evening:

Bev Ellison, Eileen Marsh

More volunteers needed – so after reading these minutes and you want to join in please email Irene on [lendf99@gmail.com](mailto:lendf99@gmail.com) Thank you.

### ***Civic Hall – Update***

Cllr Grundy pointed out that no positive news was available on the lease between Rose Leisure and Wigan Council. We must keep a eye on this.

### ***LENDF Environment Group***

The Environment Group will soon come out of hibernation!! and will begin again to look at projects for the area and revisit ideas from last year. Anyone with suggestions please contact us via email.

**Blue Badge Scheme**

It was pointed out that the new payments required when parking in Disabled Bays will be taking effect as from today.

**Lowton Social Club**

Memberships still available at £6 per year. For OAPs it is £3 which will include a free Christmas Party and drink.

**Council Budget Meeting**

Cllr Grundy reported that from the Budget Meeting at Wigan Council an increase of 2.5% in council tax would take effect this year. The cost of Fire and Police services is additional. Wigan Council refused the government freeze.

**Bedroom Tax**

To clarify this tax – it only applies to those already on benefits. Persons with disability should contact Wigan Council and request funding from government grant to alleviate any loss of benefit.

**11. Next LENDF Monthly Meeting**

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2013 @ 7.30pm (Lowton Social Club)

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Should you find any omissions or discrepancies in these minutes please contact me on [lendf99@gmail.com](mailto:lendf99@gmail.com) and let me know as soon as possible and the errors will be rectified.

Irene Thomson,  
Secretary – LENDF